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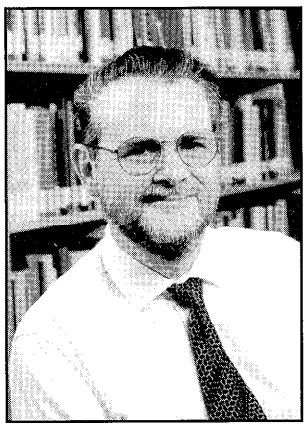

by Keith C. Sewell

This discussion is not a book review. It is nevertheless prompted by at least some of the contributions to *Whatever Happened to the Reformation?*, a volume edited by Gary L. W. Johnson and R. Fowler White, and with "Forewords" by R. C. Sproul and David F. Wells (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 2001). The contributors are deeply concerned about the state of contemporary evangelicalism. They have good cause to be.[1] They are unambiguous in their desire to see another great reformation of the church. They seek a "new reformation." We who would view reformation according to the scriptures as an ongoing calling are ill disposed to quarrel with such calls. Yet there is a problem—more precisely, a nexus of problems—attached to the case presented by the contributors to this volume.

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The term "the Reformation" can be as misleading as it is powerfully generic. As much as we should be inspired by and thankful for the immense blessings received by the church in the west at the time of the reformation, we need to take care not to fall victim to an idealized and over-simplified picture of the remarkably complex set of developments and events that historians habitually call "the Reformation." The study of history is the study of humankind's generation-by-generation use of its God-given cultural-formative power. That formative power is used to shape and fashion ideas and beliefs, institutions and societies, monuments and even entire landscapes. When historians use terms like "Ancient Greece" or "Late Classical Antiquity" or "the Renaissance" or "the Enlightenment" or "the Reformation," they are using shorthand expressions that they know encompass immense complexities. And these shorthand expressions cannot be used with any safety unless we have first absorbed at least something of the complexity to which they refer.

A prime problem of *Whatever Happened to the Reformation?* is that what is meant by "the Reformation" is never established with sufficient lucidity and detail. Rather, "the Reformation" tends to function as a high but insufficiently examined exemplar that governs the consequential critique of

much contemporary evangelicalism. However, if "the Reformation" is to be invoked in such (definitely needful) critical discussions, the term itself needs to be unpacked with care. This is not a call for a destructive "deconstructionism." On the contrary, it is important that we understand what we are talking about. To refuse to consider the likes of Luther, Calvin, and Knox in their historical context is to refuse them the effort of historical comprehension. Without such an effort, we are ever liable to misrepresent them—perhaps by default to bear false witness for or against them. And without such precision and rigor, our version of "the Reformation" can too readily become a template for what we want protestant Christianity to become in the twenty-first century.

If asked why "the Reformation" was and is so important, I think that each of the authors of this volume would include reference to the protestant recognition of the supreme authority of the scriptures in the belief and life and work of the church. Yet it is just here that we encounter problems that have had consequences for Protestants down the centuries, and that relate to the positions adopted and arguments expounded in *Whatever Happened to the Reformation?* For "the Reformation" was not a single, generic event or development. It was very complex. All of the reformers received the scriptures as inspired and authoritative—yet there were many differences between them. Not least, the reformation movement(s) overall did not exhibit a single view of how the authority of the scriptures was to function in the life of the Church and of God's people generally. In other words, while all agreed on the inspiration and authority of the scriptures, there were from the very outset profound differences about how this played out in practice. These differences helped create a marked diversity across emergent Protestantism. Moreover, these differences existed from the earliest years—the 1520s onwards—and were sharply apparent by the 1550s and 1560s.

It might be useful to express these differences in the following terms, provided that the limitations of too hard and fast a categorization are recognized. The point here is not to engage in a crude labeling, but to gain historical insight into the structure of the reformation situation.

(1) Amongst the *Evangelische* (Lutherans), there developed what I would term the *Lutheran corrective* view of biblical authority. This position tended to say that everything that was traditional in the doctrine and life of the church was to be retained, unless it was expressly contrary to biblical teaching and example. Matters not explicitly discussed by the Bible were liable to be considered as *adiaphora*—things indifferent. There was a strong contrasting between the inner spiritual and the outer temporal. It is consistent with the "two realm teaching" *(Zweireichslehre)* that has been such an important feature of Lutheran thinking. In England, the official reformation, promoted by the Crown under

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Edward VI and Elizabeth I, largely adhered to this standpoint. Matters considered *adiaphora* according to this formula were settled according to the requirements of the Crown—the "godly prince." The leaders of the "official" English Reformation accepted and endorsed the retention of episcopacy (the government of the church by a hierarchy of bishops) because it was required by the crown. Only later were some leaders of the Church of England to argue that episcopacy was the will of God.

(2) To read some general textbooks is to gain the impression that the Reformation was almost exclusively a German-speaking affair. The subsequent strength of German historical scholarship can appear to confirm this picture. Yet, not all early Protestantism was German—a significant proportion of it was Swiss—and the Swiss Reformation was both German and French speaking. In Switzerland we are confronted with a non-Lutheran reformation—a reformation that came to be labeled "Reformed" in order to distinguish it from the *Evangelische* (Lutheran). And these other Swiss "reformations" differed amongst themselves as to their view of the authority of scripture, as well as with the Lutheran standpoint expressed in the German and Scandinavian lands to the north.

The Reformation in Saxony, under Luther at Wittenberg (1517-21), was followed very closely by

reform in Zürich under Zwingli (1522). In both cases, the processes involved were deeply dependent upon the acceptance, co-operation, and protection of "the civil magistrate." Luther was deeply indebted to the protection of Frederick the Wise of Saxony. The Zwinglian reformation in Zürich was deeply dependent on the support of the municipal authorities. Zwingli died, with tragic irony, on the field of battle, in 1531. Luther lived until 1546. If Luther had died earlier and Zwingli had lived to a ripe old age the Reformation could have ended up very differently.

As it was, Zwingli's place was filled by the able, influential, and often seriously underestimated Henry Bullinger. The view of the authority of scripture that came to expression in Zürich might be termed *regulative*. According to this view, whatever had no explicit warrant in scripture had no place in the doctrine and life of the church. In appearance, at least to reformed eyes, the reformation in Zürich looked much more "protestant." It was Zwingli and his followers who broke with all images, while Lutherans retained the use of vestments and their version of the mass—substituting Luther's consubstantiation for Catholicism's transubstantiation.

The Zwingli-Zürich *regulative* view of the authority of scripture was to be highly influential. It left its mark on English Puritanism, for example. It developed a strong moral emphasis. In certain respects, like its leaders, it was open to the influences of late medieval and renaissance scholasticism. According to this view, what was not explicitly addressed in scripture could too easily be viewed as *adiaphora*. Moreover, we should not forget that Bullinger's ministry in Zürich lasted from 1531 to 1575. It was appreciated and respected across Europe, and outlasted—we might even say outflanked—Calvin's final and longest uninterrupted period at Geneva from 1541 to 1564. Bullinger composed the *Second Helvetic Confession* (1566), which was highly influential as far afield as Scotland, France, Hungary, and Poland.

As whole volumes of the Parker Society series testify, the Zürich reformation had a profound influence on England.[2] Thomas Cranmer's view of the Lord's Supper was much closer to that of Zürich than of Wittenberg. The subordination of the Zürich Church to the civil magistrate accorded comfort to those who advocated the compromises of the Elizabethan Settlement (1558). On the other hand, the *regulative* view of the authority of scripture was powerfully utilized by those of the "unofficial" English reformation who wished to purify the English Church (hence their name "Puritans") of the compromises adopted by Elizabeth. What is often lost sight of is that many English Puritans were *de facto* advocates of the use of state power in effecting the reformation of the church. When their great opportunity appeared to arise in the crisis of the 1640s, the famous "Westminster Assembly" was altogether a creature of the English Parliament. It was answerable to the House of Commons.[3]

In England, the differences between the official (Anglican) *corrective* and the minority (Puritan) *regulative* views of the authority of scripture often resulted in sharp controversy. They surfaced as early as the 1550-51 confrontation between Cranmer (as Archbishop of Canterbury) and John Hooper (then Bishop of Gloucester) on the question of ordination vestments.[4] They lasted to be the principal cause of division between the Church of England as established by law and the Protestant Dissenters—such as the English Presbyterians and Congregationalists. For more than three centuries, these distinctions produced two different cultures and outlooks on public life in England—those of the Churchman and the Dissenter.[5] At first glance the regulative view seems very impressive. It is associated with the elimination of serious errors. However, on the basis of the regulative standpoint, it proved to be impossible to decisively resolve the issues between Presbyterians and Congregationalists, and those between the advocates of infant baptism and adult-only baptism.[6]

(3) Yet the reformation in Zürich was not the only Swiss reformation. We must ask ourselves, "Where does the great ministry of Calvin in French-speaking Geneva fit in?" The truth is that Calvin was not Swiss—he came to Geneva as a Frenchman, and was always something of an outsider. Calvin was certainly more in accord with the Zwinglian than the Lutheran reformation—as much as he appreciated Luther himself. Yet Calvin's view of the authority of scripture was not exactly that of Zürich. I would prefer to call it *directive* rather than regulative. Moreover, Calvin's view was contextualized by his profound view of the order of creation. Our fallen condition may render us spiritually blind and deaf—

but both creation and scripture bear eloquent testimony to the Creator. This *Calvinian-reformational* view does not downplay scrupulous attention to specific biblical passages—look at Calvin's unsurpassed standing as an exegete—but in the long run it wants to see the full meaning of the gospel applied to the whole of life. It was in such a context that Calvin—far from being the theocratic dictator of enlightenment-liberal propagandistic historiography—struggled to assert the distinctive calling and authority of the church in relation to that of the civil magistrate. Even in a "Christian Commonwealth," Calvin insisted that the elders of the church, and not the civil magistrate had the calling and responsibility to bar delinquents from the Lord's Supper. There was a major issue here that some much later generations of Calvinists came to understand in terms of "sphere sovereignty."

Particularly instructive was Calvin's approach when he came to consider the question of the payment of interest. He did not consider only a few prohibitory texts, using them to dispose of the question in a cut and dried manner. He had regard for the wider implications of the gospel and the state of the culture in which he was living.[7] He took the order of creation seriously.[8] His approach was to take the whole word and apply it to the whole of life. His approach to the text was literal without being literalistic. His rejection of a false literalism is conspicuous in his handling of passages in Genesis and the Psalms having astronomical subject matter.

A great deal of ink has been expended in recent decades on whether or not Calvin's standpoint was or is compatible with the conspicuously more scholastic "federal theology" that became standard in the Reformed Churches in the latter part of the sixteenth century.[9] The truth is that no branch of the reformation wholly freed itself from scholasticism. It would be wrong to wholly exempt Calvin from such a statement, however scholasticism itself is defined.[10] The English Puritans, in their understanding of biblical authority and in their development of federal theology in the scholastic manner, were at least as influenced by developments in Zürich and the other German-speaking "reformed" centers as they were by the Geneva of Calvin and Beza.[11] At the same time, it would be remiss not to recognize that Calvin was far less encumbered by scholastic tendencies than certain of his "reformed" contemporaries. It was his successor, Theodore Beza (1519-1605) who some years after Calvin's death insisted that the philosophical standpoint of the Academy at Geneva be that of Aristotelianism.[12]

So what about the reformation in Scotland, important as it is for understanding the history of Presbyterianism, also in North America and beyond? And what about John Knox's famous reference to Geneva as "the maist perfyt schoole of Chryst since the dayis of the Apostills"?[13] Knox's perceptions and appropriations of Calvin's ministry and teaching are one of those areas crying out for scrupulous research. Already at the time of the

Calvin's view of the authority of scripture was directive rather than regulative.

"Knox-Cox" confrontation between the official Anglican and proto-Puritan elements that racked the English protestant refugee church in Frankfurt in 1555, Knox's Zürich-style regulative view of the authority of scripture was conspicuously in evidence.[14] And certainly, the correspondence between Knox and Calvin from the crucial year of the reformation in Scotland (1560) down to Calvin's demise in 1564 merits careful reading.[15]

Arguably, Knox and his successors appreciated and commended Calvin's ministry in Geneva very much in terms of Knox's own regulative notion of the character and application of biblical authority.[16] The more creationally sensitive and directional character of Calvin's view of biblical authority was never to gain such a central place in the emerging Presbyterian ethos.[17] At the same time, Geneva did provide Knox and Scotland with a prime example of a key principle—that the civil magistrate had no jurisdiction over the church with respect to intrinsically ecclesiastical responsibilities, such as the determination of admission to the Lord's Supper. In this respect, Scotland followed Geneva. The results included many an epic episode in the history of Scottish Christianity, as Presbyterian leaders repeatedly struggled against the usurpations and presumptions of monarchs and parliaments. Nevertheless, in

many other respects historic Presbyterianism tended to adopt the Zwingli-Zürich regulative standpoint. Music, drama, and the visual arts have often fared not so well in such environments.

And what are we to make of the general assumption that Presbyterianism is simply Calvinism speaking with a Scottish, Ulster, American, or other such accent? Here the history of the term "Calvinism" is itself relevant. The term itself would not have met with Calvin's approval. It came into existence largely as a recognition of Calvin's supreme authorial position amongst the "Reformed"—in the perceptions of non Reformed (specifically Lutheran) writers. The second and third generation of Lutheran traditionalists were threatened by "Reformed" inroads into the German *Länder*, and by the emergence of the "Crypto-Calvinists"—followers of Melanchthon (1497-1560) who were strongly sympathetic towards Calvin's view of the Lord's Supper.[18] As the polemical advocates of what they understood as *the* Lutheran tradition became more critical of "the Reformed," they focused on Calvin and talked of "Calvinism." In England the terms "Calvinistic" and "Calvinistical" only achieved something of their subsequent and almost exclusively soteriological currency in the context of the Synod of Dort (1618-19), and later in the eighteenth century, at the time of the "Calvinistic Controversy" between the *evangelical* followers of John Wesley and George Whitefield.[19]

Undoubtedly, the regulative and the directional viewpoints, as I have termed them, have on occasion been very closely intertwined in practice. Nevertheless, they represent two different approaches. This connection helps us to understand the extraordinary difficulty of determining the limits of the term "Calvinism." For some, "Puritanism" is the very essence of Calvinism, while for others "Puritanism" is the death of Calvinism. These confusions can only be elucidated and disentangled by patient historical research. Yet much research on the history of Calvinism is of problematic status.

In the late nineteenth century, the great historian of Norman-English Law, Frederic William Maitland, gave an inaugural lecture entitled *Why the History of English Law is not Written.*[20] He argued that there was no history of English law because common lawyers had too great an investment in an anachronistic use of precedent. Those who made law by interpreting the common law could not live without their "precedents." Something similar has happened with respect to the history of Calvinism and Reformed Christianity. Too much Church history—the history of the Reformation not excluded—is written with a view to legitimizing and advocating a subsequent and usually contemporary theological thesis or denominational standpoint. Such latter-day partisanship, which may be accompanied by claims to be the true heirs and spiritual descendants of the great reformer, are more readily sustained because of the lamentable failure to produce (in the twentieth century) a definitive English language edition of the "Complete Works of John Calvin." The last general history of Calvinism was published almost fifty years ago.[21] A great deal of highly detailed research has been published in the meantime. Nevertheless, a truly cogent account will need to answer certain crucial foundational questions, such as "How are we to determine what Calvinism is?" and "What is Calvinism for the purposes of writing its history?"

So we must not be too hard on the contributors to *Whatever Happened to the Reformation?* In certain respects they are the victims of our present lack of a history of the "Calvinistic" Reformation—one that pays sufficient attention to the functioning of principial and structural issues. Yet we should not be too concessive either. In certain respects they are part of the problem, because the present situation makes possible a "reformation" that they can presume upon. Indeed, their "reformation" is so "cut and dried," so finally set in their minds, that it would seem as if no further research is required. In truth, it is a version of the Reformation that is strongly oriented towards what I have termed the *regulative* approach to the authority of scripture. In its discussion of a range of ecclesiastical and doctrinal questions, it generally assumes the exclusive legitimacy of the regulative standpoint.

This orientation is a major drawback. The "regulative principle," because it tends to limit us to the "precedents" set by the *ipsisima verba* of scripture, finds itself unable to address issues not explicitly contemplated by the biblical authors. What about the calling of Christians in multi-party political systems where they as citizens are called upon not only to obey those in lawful office, but to participate in

the political process? What about Christian political obedience under such circumstances, as well as the formation of Christian political endeavors in line with the scriptures, but not explicitly contemplated by the biblical authors? And what about the Christian labor union? Or hospital or clinic? Or university or college? By confining itself to what is explicitly referred to in scripture, the regulative approach, it could be argued, actually withdraws what is not explicitly mentioned (whatever has emerged in our culture during the succeeding centuries) from the scope of Christian discipleship. In this respect, the regulative standpoint might actually facilitate the secularization of our culture. The regulative principle tends to regulate only that which it deems sacred, and thereby effectively *deregulates* the rest of life. It can leave the supposedly neutral realm of "nature" untouched. Moreover, in this view, science is too easily presumed to be neutral, *adiaphora*, unless and until it comes up with a theory that explicitly contradicts what has hitherto been regarded as biblical teaching.

Undoubtedly, the contributors to *Whatever Happened to the Reformation?* are deeply committed to the "all sufficiency of scripture." However, because they construe the latter in terms of the *regulative* view of biblical authority, they effectively limit this "all sufficiency" to what the bible explicitly says. The problem is that this position does not correctly represent the scope and intention of scripture. The Bible does not tell us all about all things. Yet that does not mean that those things not explicitly mentioned are beyond its scope. Just because something is not explicitly mentioned in the Bible does not mean that it is beyond the scope of its teaching. Rather, the teaching of the Bible is all encompassing in that the scriptures do tell us what all things are all about.

By contrast, the reformation and renewal of Calvinism which took place in the Netherlands in the nineteenth century drew upon the deeper principles of the Calvinistic Reformation, even as it sought to re-articulate those principles in a context vastly changed by the Enlightenment and the consequences of the French Revolution. Accordingly, the movement that was eventually led by Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) took the order of creation seriously and saw the scriptures as all-directive rather than limitedly regulative. Art and literature, science and culture, politics and education all fell within the ambit of obedient Christian discipleship. Of course, to read the cosmic vision of Kuyper as articulated by him in the nineteenth century back into the reforming work of Calvin would be to engage in the dubious conjuring tricks of contrived anachronism. Yet there is a profound inner connection between the two, so that it is practically impossible to envisage Kuyper without reference to his Calvinian foundations.

It would be absurd to suggest that Kuyper's teaching was without defect. The same could be said of Luther, Calvin, and Knox. And it was not until the twentieth century that many of Kuyper's "Christian world-view" declarations were unpacked and honed with philosophical precision by his spiritual and intellectual heirs. But this is not the reformational tradition to which the contributors to *Whatever Happened to the Reformation?* are attached. Their commitment is to the regulative rather than the directional view of biblical authority. And this position becomes abundantly clear when they address the latter-day advocates of the Calvinian-reformational standpoint. This view is particularly evident in the contributions of D. M. Jones and Darryl G. Hart.[22]

The regulative view of scripture might actually facilitate the secularization of our culture.

The first of these authors, D. M. Jones, seems to have little time for Christian philosophy of the reformational variety. At the same time, his own scheme is reminiscent of Thomas Reid (1710-1796), the Scottish enlightenment philosopher (*Whatever Happened to the Reformation?*, 43f). D. M. Jones is ill at ease with the creaturely, and therefore limited and perspectival character of our perceptions and understanding. He seems deeply opposed to any discussion of a Christian world-view. For him, such world-view talk bespeaks a postmodernist style of relativism, in which he finds the later work of J. Richard Middleton and Brian J. Walsh deeply mired (31f.).[23] Jones' handling of

Kuyper's admirer Herman Dooyeweerd seems to suggest that the latter is responsible for a slide into subjectivistic relativism, when in fact Dooyeweerd repeatedly warned against the perils of historicism, as Craig Bartholomew has so pertinently observed.[24]

By contrast, the philosophical successors of Kuyper recognized the creaturely status of theorizing.[25] Unlike Jones, they did not entertain the notion that things could be just seen. They recognized that things are always "seen as" or "in terms of." In recognizing this limited and perspectival character, they did not abandon themselves to subjectivism but aspired to the inner reformation of theoretical thought. Such a project is sustainable in terms of the Calvinistic and reformational view of the directional authority of scripture but not in terms of either the corrective or regulative alternatives. The latter must always have a proof text. Where there is no proof text, neutrality is likely to be assumed. On the other hand, the directional view seeks to understand the whole of life in terms of all that is revealed. Jones fears that this approach will eventually involve contradicting the presumed meaning of proof texts (29). He does not seem to want to reflect on the fact that the long-term implications of the gospel have included the abolition of slavery, even though such an abolition was not explicitly commanded in the New Testament, and in spite of Paul's willingness to accept the realities of his own time.[26]

These problems are also apparent in the contribution made by Darryl G. Hart. Hart has placed us all in his debt with his important work on J. Gresham Machen (1881-1937).[27] In his contribution to *Whatever Happened to the Reformation?* Hart places Machen's important early address on "Christianity and Culture" (1912) in a wider and Kuyperian context (186, 189). However, it soon becomes clear that it is a later Machen who is held up as the great example—a Machen who apparently sets aside a wide-ranging Christian scholarship in order to concentrate on biblical and theological studies. He too is suspicious of all talk about a Christian "world and life view." Past and present writers such as Carl Henry, Harold Ockenga, Os Guinness, and Mark Noll are seen as among those who have echoed something of the Kuyperian vision but have fallen into a compromising of the faith in their quest for intellectual respectability (188-190).[28] Hart has also expressed his views on these topics in the pages of the *Christian Scholar's Review*.[29] He supports his view that II Corinthians 10:5 does not encompass the disciplining of our theoretical thought by referring to the relatively low level of education in the congregations of men such as Calvin, Ames, Perkins, and Baxter. It is as if the circumstances of those men impose on succeeding generations a curtailment of the full meaning of the passage (190-192). In short, an argument against carnal intellectualism is used as justification for a polemic against Christian education and Christian scholarship, in which the educational calling is wrongly placed in an antithetical position over and against the preaching of the word (192-195).

When he comes to discuss the question "What is Scholarship For?" Hart will not accept a response that says it is for the glory of God (195). He seems to react against the ambition and pride that is all too prevalent in academia. His reaction is understandable. Where present, such tendencies do need to be repented of and forsaken. But we should not forget that the church and the seminary are not immune from such things also, and they also have their sins to repent of. However, the only Christian scholarship Hart wishes to recognize is that which is focused on the book, the Bible, for the benefit of the church. A biblically directed study of the order of creation is not in view here.

All this needs to be kept in view as we consider Hart's rejection of a Christian world and life view as understood in Kuyperian terms (198f.). It is hard to escape the conclusion that he prefers the dualisms that have left their mark on the confessions of the seventeenth century to the integral articulation of the Calvinian-reformational standpoint made by Kuyper and his spiritual successors. Rather, he sets Calvin's spiritually profound understanding of the Christian life in opposition to Kuyper's sense of the breadth of our calling (200-202). Yes, Christ's kingdom is not *of* this world, but it is over *all* creation. Sadly, it would seem that Hart, rather than consider further the Calvinian-reformational standpoint of Kuyper, would prefer us to incline in the direction of the old Lutheran *Zweireichslehre*, or to some form of post-reformation pietism (203).

So what conclusions might be drawn from reading *Whatever Happened to the Reformation?*

Firstly, a little history is a dangerous thing. The Reformation was not a simple but a highly complex

development. I believe that the Reformation was highly positive, but also, like so much else in human history, it was also deeply flawed. Also, the Reformation took place in a profoundly different cultural context than our own. Such contexts are not in themselves authoritative, but they are not to be ignored. Accordingly, appeals for a "new reformation" can be as ambiguous as they are sincere. A biblically directed study of human history delivers us from circular assumptions and anachronistic perceptions, even as it opens up to us an appreciation of the deeper continuities. If the Holy Spirit were to move amongst God's people in another great authentic movement of reformation and renewal, we should not necessarily expect the effects to look like that of the sixteenth-century or the eighteenth-century either. The ever-present features of such a movement would definitely be present, but in ways that would be reflective of our very different culture and historical circumstances.

Secondly, Hart works with a highly mediated view of Abraham Kuyper. It seems to be fashioned by two North American influences. He associates a Kuyperian "world and life view" too readily with those who may have conceded too much to postmodern relativism. He also associates it with the school of evangelical historiography represented by figures such as Mark A. Noll and George A. Marsden. This association is problematic. Certainly these writers, and others of their school, have on occasion chosen to identify themselves with the programmatic breadth and comprehensiveness of Kuyper's vision. However, it is not clear that they have been prepared to adopt with any methodological rigor the more acute insights of Kuyper's Netherlandic successors. For example, Noll's *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* seems more intent on rescuing evangelical thinking from the clutches of a fundamentalism conspicuous for its biblistic creationism and culture-discounting, dispensationalist pre-millenialism than for any commitment to the inner reformation of theoretical thought itself.[30] For Noll, "The scandal of the evangelical mind is that there is not much of an evangelical mind."[31] A more integral response might counter by saying that there is an evangelical mind, a very well developed evangelical mind, and that the scandal lies in it being much less biblically in-formed and directed than many evangelicals appreciate.

We might argue that this school of writers is less intrinsically Kuyperian than either they claim or Hart believes. Marsden seems to believe that it is possible to work with a methodological *Gestalt* switch, whereby a generally Kuyperian perspectival approach can alternate with one more committed to ideas of "common sense" originating not from the Calvinistic reformation but the Scottish enlightenment.[32] The latter may facilitate a mode of historiographical discourse acceptable to the professional guild and secular academy. In this respect, the "Kuyperians" criticized by Hart may be seen as unintentionally facilitating the process of secularization. They need to confront the challenge implicit in his critique. However, Hart too readily accepts their own characterization of themselves as Kuyperian, when in fact they are much more *evangelical* than they ever are post-Kuyperian reformational.

Appeals for a "new reformation" can be as ambiguous as they are sincere.

Which brings me to my *third* and final point. The authors of *Whatever Happened to the Reformation?* too quickly associate—even equate—the Protestant Reformation with their preferred form of latter-day evangelicalism. The result is highly questionable on both historical and structural grounds. Historically, they draw far too straight a line from their reformation archetype across fields of historical complexity to their required form of contemporary evangelicalism.

Evangelicalism does not date from the early sixteenth, but from the early to mid-eighteenth century.[33] However, the essential roots of evangelicalism lie deep in the ethos of Lutheran pietism, as mediated to the British Isles and North America in the 1730s and 1740s, particularly by the Moravians. From the outset, the leading English evangelicals were committed members of the Church of England. Their pietistic outlook, with its emphasis on inner personal holiness, accorded well with its *corrective* view of the authority of scripture.

Questions of external polity fell within the realm of *adiaphora*. The visible denominational structure became the context within which a "church within the church" of the truly converted might function, even as the same churchly structure might, as conditions permitted, be used as a platform from which to preach the gospel to the unconverted. In this respect, the early English evangelicals have been archetypal for Anglophone evangelicalism worldwide. This whole posture accorded well with the (Lutheran) establishmentarian outlook of the ruling Hanoverian dynasty. Certainly, evangelicalism was not so internalized as to foreswear all public good works. Think of the many projects for orphans and the eventual abolition of slavery in the British Empire. Nevertheless, the whole orientation was towards the preservation of the established order. Such evangelical endeavors were ameliorative rather than reformational.

Structurally, and especially when contrasted to the Calvinian-Reformational standpoint articulated by Kuyper and his followers, with its directional view of the authority of scripture, evangelicalism has typically lacked a clear insight into the biblical view of the order of creation. David Bebbington rightly defines the distinguishing characteristics of evangelicalism as follows: "conversionism, the belief that lives need to be changed; activism, the expression of the gospel in effort; biblicism, a particular regard for the Bible; and ... crucicentrism, a stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross."[34] These were the classic emphases of the Moravians, and they became those of English-speaking evangelicalism. What is structurally wrong with this position is its failure to take the order of creation seriously. In evangelicalism it is as if the cross replaces the creation.[35] The result is all too often envisaged in terms of souls escaping to an ethereal heaven—rather than as the coming of Christ's Kingdom in the fullness of a new heaven and a new earth.[36]

The widespread evangelical willingness to be opportunistically pragmatic with respect to all that is not expressly forbidden has opened the door to much in the church to which the authors of *Whatever Happened to the Reformation?* object. However, the authors' commitment to the "regulative principle" is of no avail. It offers no real defense against the decline they see on all sides. It leaves unclaimed for the gospel so much of what it deems secularly indifferent, and that, unless reformed, only undermines the life and testimony of God's people. When all is said and done, only a standpoint consistent with an integral and biblically directed world-view will suffice, because the choice before us is not only churchly. It is the choice between a Christianity that is formed by the world, and a Christianity that is world formative.

ENDNOTES

1. In this context see John H. Armstrong (General Editor), *The Coming Evangelical Crisis* (Chicago IL: The Moody Press, 1996), and the extensive discussions offered by David F. Wells, *No Place for Truth or, Whatever happened to Evangelical Theology?* and *God in the Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams* (Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1993 and 1994 respectively).
2. See the Parker Society editions of *The Zurich Letters comprising The Correspondence of Several English Bishops and Others with some of the Helvetian Reformers during the Early Part of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* [First Series], and Second Series edited by Hastings Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1843 and 1845 respectively).
3. See Robert S. Paul, *The Assembly of the Lord: Politics and Religion in the Westminster Assembly and the "Grand Debate"* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1985), 69-71, 127-132, and 493-502.
4. Iain Murray, *The Reformation of the Church* (London: Banner of Truth, 1965), 53-58, Cf. C. Hopf, "Bishop Hooper's 'Notes' to the King's Council, 3 October 1550," *Journal of Theological Studies* 44 (1943): 194-199. For Iain Murray's own commitment to the "regulative principle", see his "Scripture and 'Things Indifferent'" [1963], as reprinted in *Puritan Papers Volume III: 1963-1964*, edited by James I. Packer (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2001), 21-50.
5. The initial Puritan objections can be too easily dismissed as clerical in-fighting and theological quarrelsomeness over minor details of ministerial dress and administrative structures. Those too impatient with such matters are liable to miss the point that decisive principles were confronting one another. The literature on the Puritan critique of what became Anglicanism is vast, but for a careful introduction see John F. H. New, *Anglican and Puritan: The Basis of Their Opposition*, 1558-1640 (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1964). The term "Anglican" achieved currency only in the nineteenth century. New uses the term in order to contrast those who supported the status quo of the "Elizabethan Settlement" and the "Puritans" who sought to purify with further reform. It should be remembered that

most Puritans were not separatists. In this connection see the classic work by A. F. Scott Pearson, *Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism, 1535-1603* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), as well as the more recent biography by Patrick Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal, 1519-1583: The Struggle for a Reformed Church* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1979) and *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988). In England, Puritanism became "Protestant Dissent" after 1662. For a detailed narration, see Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters: From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (London: Oxford University Press, 1978).

6. If I have left aside from this discussion any consideration of the Anabaptist radicals, it is not because I regard them as historically insignificant. I would characterize the Anabaptist view as exemplary rather than regulative, sometimes exhibiting strongly a-historical tendencies. It is noteworthy that, initially at least, some on the Lutheran side found it hard to distinguish Zwingli and his followers from the Anabaptists. At first some Swiss Anabaptists considered Zwingli to be one of their own, only to be disappointed. The challenge presented by the Anabaptists helps to explain why teaching concerning the covenant received such an early and characteristic development in reformed doctrinal thinking. For the inability of the exponents of the regulative principle to resolve the issue between Presbyterianism and Congregationalism, see John R. De Witt, *Jus Divinium: The Westminster Assembly and the Divine Right of Church Government* (Kampen: Kok, 1969), especially 61-67, 100-166 and 234-241.
7. Cf. André Biéler, *The Social Humanism of Calvin* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1964), 27-63, and W. Fred Graham, *The Constructive Revolutionary: John Calvin and His Socio-Economic Impact* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1972), 66-94 and 116-127.
8. Edward A. Dowey, *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, third edition, 1994), 3-147.
9. David A. Weir, *The Origins of the Federal Theology in Sixteenth-Century Reformation Thought* (London: Oxford University Press, 1990), in this context particularly 1-7 and 62-98.
10. For various characterizations of "scholasticism," see John S. Bray, *Theodore Beza's Doctrine of Predestination*, (Nieukoop: De Graaf, 1975), 10-15; Richard A. Muller, *The Unaccommodated Calvin. Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 42-57; and Erika Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 12-18, 30-34, and in this context also 145-147.
11. The English Puritans particularly embraced the Covenantal (Federal) theology articulated by Bullinger, combining this with the post-Calvin development of reformed-presbyterial views of church government in Geneva. Cf. J. Wayne Baker, *Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenant: The Other Reformed Tradition* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 1980), particularly 205-208 in relation to William Perkins, and David A. Weir, *The Origins of Federal Theology in Sixteenth-Century Reformation Thought*, op cit, especially 9-59 in relation to Bullinger and 137-147 for the key part played by Dudley Fenner. According to Weir, "Bullinger...took Zwingli's use of the covenant to defend infant baptism and expanded it into a much broader concept. He used it for a unified vision of history: history for Bullinger, is not marked by radical discontinuity between the Old and New Testaments, but by unity and continuity." *Ibid.*, 10. See also endnotes 6 and 17.
12. For example, in a letter to Petrus Ramus dated December 1, 1570, Beza was emphatic concerning the "determination" of the Academy in Geneva "to follow the position of Aristotle, without deviating a line, be it in logic or in the rest of our studies." *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1983), Volume XI, 295. Calvin can only be said to have been in any sense "secure" in Geneva from 1555 onwards. Beza arrived in Geneva in 1558 and significantly influenced the context of Calvin's later ministry, as well as shaping his subsequent reputation. Beza's *La vie de Calvin* appeared in the year of Calvin's death (1564).
13. John Knox to Mrs. Anne Locke, December 9, 1556. *The Works of John Knox*, edited by David Laing (Edinburgh: James Thin, 1845), Volume VI, 240.
14. For a comprehensive modern account, see Jasper Ridley, *John Knox* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 171-214. Cf. *The Works of John Knox*, edited by David Laing, op cit, Volume IV, 1-49.
15. Not all of this correspondence has survived. The point is that the regulative standpoint too readily drove Knox to act as if there was only ever one way of obedience. Calvin, for his part, who could never be rightly called a pragmatist, was more open to take cultural circumstances into consideration. Accordingly, with carefully balanced prose, on April 23, 1561, Calvin wrote to Knox as follows: "I rejoice exceedingly ... that the gospel has made such rapid and happy progress among you. That they should have stirred up violent opposition against you is nothing new. But the power of God is the more conspicuously displayed in this, that no attacks either of Satan or of the ungodly have hitherto prevented you from advancing with triumphant constancy in the right course, though you could never have been equal to the task of resistance, unless He who is superior to all the world had held out to you from heaven a helping hand. With regard

to ceremonies, I trust, even should you displease many, that you will moderate your rigour. Of course it is your duty to see that the church be purged of all defilements which flow from error and superstition. For it behoves us to strive sedulously that the mysteries of God be not polluted by the admixture of ludicrous or disgusting rites. But with this exception, you are well aware that certain things should be tolerated even if you do not quite approve of them." *Selected Works of John Calvin: Tracts and Letters*, edited by Henry Beveridge and Jules Bonnet (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Publications, 1858), Volume VII, 184. See also especially John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, translated by Ford Lewis Battles, edited by John T. McNeill (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1960), IV.10.27-32 (Volume II, 1205-1210).

16. Arguably this accounts for the clear tendency of Scottish and Scots-Irish advocates of the Presbyterian polity to seek to substantiate each distinctive feature of the system with reference to specific texts. See *The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government* (1645), reprinted in Iain Murray, *The Reformation of the Church*, op cit, 203-230, and the arguments presented by Thomas Witherow (1824-1890) in *The Apostolic Church. Which is it?* (1854), extensively reprinted (including Glasgow: Free Presbyterian, 1976).
17. Of course, the Presbyterian polity was not immediately established in Scotland in 1560. It was consolidated and definitively formulated only in the years after Calvin's death. See the discussion offered by Patrick Collinson in *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967), 102-121.
18. To their immense credit, Bullinger and Calvin came to an agreement on the Lord's Supper, as formulated in the *Consensus Tigurinus* of 1549. Much was due to Calvin's desire for Christian unity. His stance differed markedly from that of Luther at the Colloquy of Marburg in October 1529. For an important discussion see Paul E. Rorem, "*The Consensus Tigurinus* (1549): Did Calvin Compromise?" in *Calvinus Sacrae Scripturae Professor: Calvin as Confessor of Holy Scripture*, edited by Wilhelm H. Neuser (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1994): 72-90.
19. It was in these terms that the redoubtable Augustus Montague Toplady published his *The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism* (1769), reprinted in *The Works of the Reverend A. M. Toplady*, A. B. (London: Ebenezer Palmer, 1828), Volume V, 1-149, and *Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of the Church of England* (1774) reprinted in, *The Works of the Reverend A. M. Toplady*, A. B., *op. cit*, Volumes I, 153-494, and II, 1-349.
20. Frederic William Maitland, *Why the History of English Law is not Written* [An Inaugural Lecture delivered in the University of Cambridge Arts School, 13 October 1888]. Reprinted in *The Collected Papers of Frederic William Maitland, Volume I* edited by H. A. L. Fisher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911), 480-497. See also J. H. Baker, *Why the History of English Law has not been finished* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) [An Inaugural Lecture delivered in the Law School of the University of Cambridge, 14 October, 1998]. Baker poses the question: "What is the law for the purposes of legal history?"
21. John T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954). It should be noted that Yale University Press has announced Philip Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* as "the first synthetic history of Calvinism in almost fifty years." Publication is due October 2002.
22. D. M. Jones and Darryl G. Hart, "Dismantling the Postmodern Prison" and "Taking Every Thought Captive: The Ministry of the Word and the Limits of Christian Scholarship" in *Whatever Happened to the Reformation?* 27-57 and 185-203 respectively.
23. The reference is to J. Richard Middleton and Brian J. Walsh, *Truth is Stranger Than It Used to Be: Biblical faith in a Postmodern Age* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1995).
24. Craig. G. Bartholomew, "Critical Issues in Recent Developments in Reformational Philosophy: A Perspective," *Koers Bulletin for Christian Scholarship* 60 (1995): 189-212, especially at 197-203 and 208-209.
25. In this connection, Harriet A. Harris makes some prescient observations in her contribution "A Diamond in the Dark: Kuyper's Doctrine of Scripture" to *Religion, Pluralism and Public Life: Abraham Kuyper's Legacy for the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Luis E. Lugo (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000): 123-144.
26. Cf. David L. Thompson, "Women, Men, Slaves and the Bible: Hermeneutical Inquiries," *Christian Scholar's Review* 25 (1996): 326-349.
27. Darryl G. Hart, *Defending the Faith: J. Gresham Machen and the Crisis of Conservative Protestantism in Modern America* (Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994, reprinted, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995).
28. Hart's thinking at this point finds a close parallel in Iain Murray's *Evangelicalism Divided: A Record of Crucial Change in the Years 1950 to 2000* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2000), 173ff.
29. Specifically, Darryl G. Hart, "Christian Scholars, Secular Universities, and the Problem with the Antithesis," *Christian Scholar's Review* 30 (2001): 383-402. In this context see especially 391-393.
30. For a recent appreciation, see Roy A. Clouser, "The Uniqueness of Dooyeweerd's Program for Philosophy and Science: Whence the Difference?", in *Christian Philosophy at the Close of the Twentieth*

Century: Assessment and Perspective, edited by Sander Griffioen and Bert M. Balk (Kok: Kampen, 1995), 113-125.

31. Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1994), 1.
32. George M. Marsden, "Common Sense and the Spiritual Vision of History," in *History and Historical Understanding*, edited by C. T. McIntire and Ronald A. Wells, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1984), 61-65. Cf. Ronald A. Wells, *History Through the Eyes of Faith: Western Civilization and the Kingdom of God* (San Francisco, CA, 1989), 8-11.
33. I grant that in some contexts the ground was prepared for evangelicalism especially in the post-1660 internalization and individualization of Puritanism. Undoubtedly, this helps explain why generations of evangelicals have warmed to John Bunyan. R. Ernest Stoeffler, *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (Leiden: Brill, 1971) must be read with care. The initial responses of Protestant Dissent to evangelicalism were cautious. The early interactions between men such as Isaac Watts and Philip Doddridge on the one hand and John Wesley and George Whitefield on the other repay scrupulous analysis—here is the interface between old dissent and the new evangelicalism. Certainly, Wesley appropriated the extensive literary legacy of Puritanism *on his own terms*.
34. David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 3.
35. Cf. Gordon J. Spykman, *Reformational Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1992), 176.
36. See, for example, the stimulating work by David Lawrence, *Heaven ... It's not the End of the World!* (London: Scripture Union, 1995). In spite of the way he uses Calvin at one point, this writer has clearly drawn on reformed writers such as G. C. Berkouwer, Bob Goudzwaard, and Al Wolters.